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ABSTRACT

In response to the growing need for day care in Tennessee, the Governor's Task Force on Day Care was appointed to encourage the development of more and better day care opportunities for the children of working parents. Three committees were established to develop recommendations. The Access to Day Care Committee identified the types of day care in short supply and recommended ways to improve the availability and accessibility of care. The Quality of Day Care Committee examined issues related to quality including parent involvement, provider training, and standards of care; and developed recommendations on ways to improve the quality of day care. The Employer Support for Day Care Committee developed ways to encourage more awareness about day care among employers and more support for day care in industry and small business. Following an executive summary and introduction to the report, day care services in Tennessee are described in terms of availability and type of day care, and the role of the state government. Then, each committee's recommendations are presented, along with general background information, findings, and supporting material. The specific agencies and groups responsible for the implementation of the recommendations are indicated in the appendices. Agency, department, and staff liaison to the task force are also listed in the appendices. (RH)

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Special Report of the Governor's Task Force On Day Care

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State of Tennessee
August 1986

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON DAY CARE

June 6, 1986

Lamar Alexander
Governor
State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37219

Dear Governor Alexander:

On behalf of the Governor's Task Force on Day Care, I am pleased to present to you a special report, "Day Care . . . A Growing Need." This report is in response to your charge to encourage the development of more and better day care opportunities for the children of Tennessee's working parents. Since January this year, the members of the Task Force have worked diligently to examine the issues related to day care in Tennessee.

We are particularly concerned about the quality of day care, access to day care, and the need for more employer support for day care, and our recommendations address these three areas.

We find that the day care problem is not a simple one. It cannot be solved by any one organization, but rather will require the creative energy and involvement of many groups. Our recommendations encourage public/private partnerships in addressing the need for more and better day care. Many of these recommendations can be implemented immediately. Others will require additional public resources.

We encourage you to support implementation of the Task Force's recommendations and commend you for your foresight in convening the Task Force. We have appreciated the leadership of Honey Alexander as well as the Department of Human Services. Thank you for this opportunity to work together on an issue important to us all.

Sincerely,

John L. Parish S. B. Rymer, Jr.

John Parish
Co-Chairman
Governor's Task Force on Day Care

S. B. Rymer, Jr.
Co-Chairman
Governor's Task Force on Day Care

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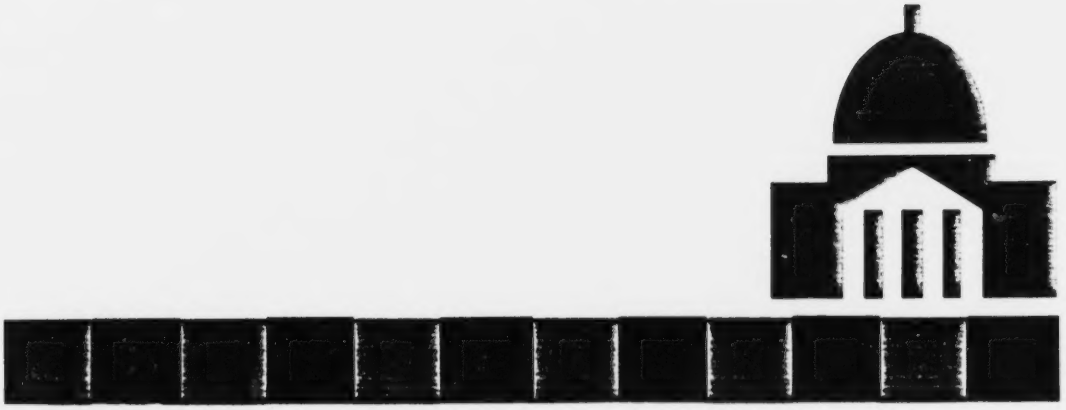


Day Care . . . A Growing Need

In order to ensure continued quality in the lives of Tennesseans now and in the future, it is imperative to address the need for good, affordable, accessible day care for the children of our working parents.

Current Need

- Currently there are 2,000 licensed day care providers serving 95,000 children. Yet, there are more than a million children in Tennessee.
- Licensed programs are available for only one out of five infants and toddlers who need care.
- There are more than 65,000 "latchkey children" who care for themselves before and after school while their parents work.
- Licensed day care is largely unavailable to many children in rural areas and to most handicapped children.
- Currently in Tennessee, over 50 percent of mothers with children under six, and over 60 percent of mothers with school age children, work outside the home.

Projected Need

- By 1990, the number of children cared for during the day by someone other than their parents will double, and two thirds of all women will work outside the home.
- By 2000, both parents will be working in 80 percent of Tennessee families.

Importance to Tennesseans

- Day care is important for the growth and development of our children—for their ability to participate in school and to become productive citizens.
- Day care is important for Tennessee families—for their present and future strength and well-being.
- Day care is important for jobs—for economic growth and development, and for employers' ability to recruit and maintain a stable, talented work force.

Advocacy for good, affordable, accessible day care becomes nothing less than advocacy for children and for our future.

The Governor's Task Force on Day Care

BACKGROUND

In response to the growing need for day care, Governor Lamar Alexander appointed the Governor's Task Force on Day Care in January, 1986.

Charge to the Task Force

To encourage the development of more and better day care opportunities for the children of Tennessee's working parents

Composition

The 42-member task force was comprised of representatives of private industry and state agencies as well as legislators, educators, day care providers, child advocates, and working parents.

Committees

Three committees were established to develop recommendations for review by the full task force:

- **Access to Day Care Committee** identified the types of day care in short supply and recommended ways to improve the availability and accessibility of care.
- **Quality of Day Care Committee** examined issues related to quality, including parent involvement, provider training, and standards of care, and developed recommendations on ways to improve the quality of day care.
- **Employer Support for Day Care Committee** developed ways to encourage more awareness about day care among employers and more support for day care in both industry and small businesses.

The following pages summarize the findings and recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Day Care.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS
GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON DAY CARE
ACCESS TO DAY CARE COMMITTEE

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
(1) Many low-income families cannot afford the cost of quality day care. Currently, day care public assistance for low-income families is inadequate.	1a. The State, United Way organizations, and other interested groups should expand assistance to low-income families by increasing the availability of subsidized quality day care.
	1b. The State's reimbursement to providers serving low-income families should more closely approximate the actual cost of care.
	1c. The State should study the feasibility of a voucher program and other creative options for low-income families. Such programs could improve access to day care for all low-income families, particularly those in rural areas.
	1d. Churches, synagogues, employers, United Way organizations, and civic groups should be encouraged to provide day care scholarships for children of low-income families.
(2) More infant and toddler care is needed.	2a. To increase the availability of quality day care, more infant and toddler day care providers should be recruited and trained. Schools, churches, synagogues, day care agencies, employers, and other community agencies should be encouraged to sponsor infant and toddler programs.
	2b. To improve access to family day care homes, a voluntary directory or registry should be established. Criteria for inclusion in the registry should be defined and made available to parents.
	2c. The model of family day care homes as satellites of new or existing agencies should be promoted.
(3) More before- and after-school care is needed for school-age children.	3a. All schools, both public and private, should be encouraged to provide or make facilities available for on-site, year-round day care programs for school-age children.
	3b. Special programs with age-appropriate activities should be developed to meet the needs of older school-age children.

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
(4) There is no comprehensive planning for day care service delivery in Tennessee, and there is a lack of coordination among agencies responsible for day care services.	4. The Department of Human Services should establish a day care planning office to be responsible for the following: • long-range planning including statewide community needs assessments • facilitating coordination among state, regional, and local service and planning agencies • providing support services for grant application and presentation • ensuring the equitable distribution of day care resources for low-income families
(5) More care for handicapped children of all ages is needed.	5a. To encourage more day care providers to serve handicapped children, technical assistance and training about the special needs of handicapped children should be made available. 5b. The State should increase the level of reimbursement to day care providers who serve handicapped children from low-income families. 5c. Programs currently serving handicapped children, such as Head Start, should expand their hours to provide full-day service to meet the needs of working parents. 5d. Churches, synagogues, employers, civic groups, and schools should be encouraged to provide day care scholarships or assistance for handicapped children.
(6) Parents need assistance in locating appropriate, quality day care.	6. The Department of Human Services should develop a statewide network of resource and referral services. Parent education about quality day care should be an important component of this service.
(7) The day care needs of teen parents are of special concern. The children of teen parents are a high-risk group for health and social problems.	7a. School systems and agencies serving teen parents should be encouraged to provide or expand classes in effective parenting skills. 7b. Schools with high pregnancy rates should be encouraged to offer on-site day care programs to enable teen parents to complete their education and learn child development and effective parenting skills. 7c. Child development courses in the schools should be expanded to include practicum components through which students can gain vocational experience while staffing day care services for the children of teen parents.

QUALITY OF DAY CARE COMMITTEE

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
(1) The general public, parents, and providers need a better understanding of what constitutes quality day care.	1a. Model programs, in which innovative methods and materials can be demonstrated, should be recognized or developed.
	1b. Ongoing efforts to increase community awareness and to promote parent education about issues affecting the quality of day care services should be conducted by a variety of organizations.
	1c. Day care providers should be encouraged to seek opportunities for productive parental involvement. To ensure the quality of care their children receive, parents should be encouraged to become more involved with their children's day care programs.
(2) Day care providers need more training in child care and business skills.	2a. The Tennessee Department of Human Services should hire additional professional staff to expand training for child care providers. Training staff should assist providers in utilizing community training opportunities available through high schools, colleges, universities, professional alliances, health care organizations, and other agencies.
	2b. The Tennessee Department of Human Services should maintain a state-of-the-art learning resource center for use by providers.
	2c. The business community should be encouraged to offer workshops to day care providers to enhance their business skills.
(3) Reductions in federal or state funding available for day care will adversely affect the quality and availability of day care for low-income families.	3. The State should take the lead in seeking to replace federal funds for day care services that are lost due to federal budget reductions.
(4) Incentives are needed to upgrade the quality of day care.	4a. A formal incentive system should be developed to encourage day care providers to exceed the required minimal standards. Agencies that meet measurable performance criteria for quality should be formally recognized.
	4b. As an incentive for providers who serve

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
	low-income families, the State should set a higher level of reimbursement for those who meet measurable performance criteria for quality.
(5) Improvements in the regulation of day care are needed.	5a. The Department of Human Services should maintain a staff of licensing counselors to ensure that the ratio of counselors to agencies does not exceed 1 to 40.
	5b. Enforcement of the day care licensing standards should be stronger and more consistent.
	5c. The various agencies that regulate day care should more effectively coordinate their activities in order to improve consistency, avoid duplication, and make it easier for day care providers to become licensed.
(6) Because the education system impacts all children, its contribution to the development of a systematic approach to providing day care is crucial.	6. Education policy makers should provide leadership for long-range planning of quality day care for children of all ages. Educators should provide technical assistance for the design of developmentally appropriate day care programs. Educators should help to extend the child care network through schools and other community agencies.

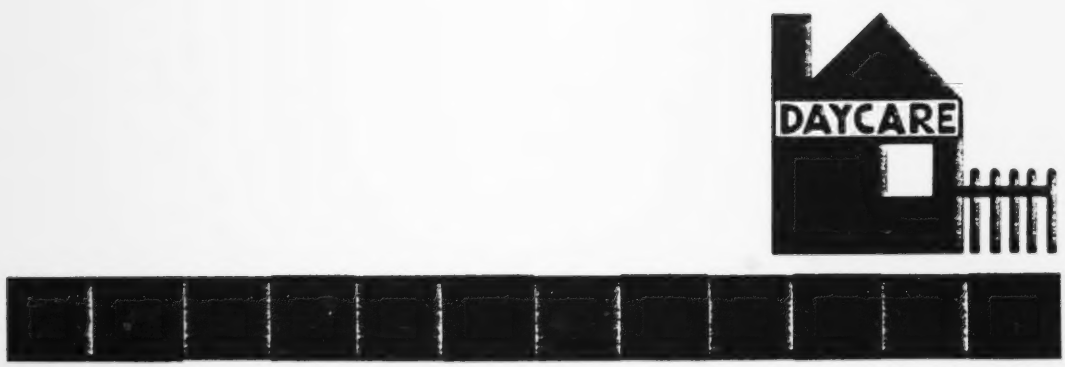
EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR DAY CARE COMMITTEE

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
(1) There is a lack of awareness among employers in Tennessee about the importance of quality day care for today's work force.	1a. Statewide activities should be sponsored to increase employer awareness about the importance of quality day care.
	1b. Information about day care should be provided to new and existing businesses through the Department of Economic and Community Development and local business and community leaders, including Chambers of Commerce, the offices of mayors and county executives, and local planning offices.
	1c. Local decision makers, such as developers, community planners, and zoning boards, should be encouraged to include

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
	day care facilities in their plans for future developments.
(2) More employers need to be encouraged to provide support for quality day care.	2a. Employers need to be recruited to support day care in their companies or in their communities. Those employers who make commitments should be recognized.
	2b. Information should be developed on the full range of options for employer involvement, including: • resource and referral service • flexible benefits, including day care • voucher program • consortium for day care with other employers • on-site day care • arrangements with community day care facilities
	2c. The Department of Human Services should develop a clearinghouse of information on employer-supported day care activities in Tennessee. The availability of this service should be publicized and the information distributed periodically.
(3) As the largest employer in Tennessee, state government should be a role model for other employers by providing support for quality day care for state employees.	3a. State government should sponsor a pilot project to serve state employees. This project should be designed as a high-quality, comprehensive program that can serve as a model demonstration project.
	3b. The departments of state government should examine available options and develop policies to address the day care needs of state employees.
	3c. The departments of state government should assist their parent employees by providing information on parenting and the importance of quality day care, and by developing ways to support employees who feel the stress of balancing work and family roles.
(4) Because day care is not the primary business of most employers, they need assistance in identifying their response to the day care needs of their employees.	4a. The Department of Human Services should develop an employer consultation team to work with employers in establishing employer-supported programs. Information and consultation should be provided in the following areas: • needs assessments • employer sponsorship options

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
	• financial considerations • education of employees in selection of quality child care • comprehensive project planning • networking among employers
	4b. The employer consultation team and the Department of Economic and Community Development should share information and resources in order to educate business and community leaders on day care.
	4c. The employer consultation team working with related agencies of state government should develop recommended guidelines for employers to use in requesting and evaluating proposals to establish quality day care programs for their employees.
(5) In order to meet the growing need for expansion of quality day care, new financing mechanisms must be developed.	5a. New sources for public and private financing for start up and expansion of day care should be explored, including state, local/state partnerships, private, nonprofit, and foundation sources. New options for financing the capital expenditures for day care should also be explored. These options include but are not limited to: • state cooperative bank program • local bond issues • venture capital program • limited partnerships
	5b. Information and assistance about existing financing options and tax incentives should be provided to employers.
(6) The rising cost and limited availability of liability insurance are major problems for providers and employers who sponsor day care programs.	6a. Policy makers should be educated as to how the liability insurance crisis affects day care.
	6b. Policy makers should be encouraged to consider legislative remedies addressing liability insurance problems.
	6c. Policy makers should give special attention to the problem of securing liability insurance for day care programs in Tennessee.
	6d. Liability insurance carriers should be encouraged to offer reduced premiums for quality day care programs. A guide to quality day care should be developed for insurance companies to use in evaluating insurability.

Introduction



Introduction
Day Care . . .
A Growing Need

Tennessee has a long-standing tradition of commitment to a high quality of life for its citizens—especially its families and children. In order to ensure continued quality in the lives of Tennesseans now and in the future, it is imperative to address the growing need for good, afforable, accessible day care for the children of our working parents.

The present need for day care is extensive—and widely recognized. Although there are more than a million children in Tennessee, only 95,000 are being cared for by one of the 2,000 li-

censed day care providers in the state. Licensed programs are available for only one out of five infants and toddlers who need care. In addition, there are more than 65,000 "latchkey children" who care for themselves before and after school while their parents work. They need before-and after-school, holiday, and summer vacation care. Day care is largely unavailable to many children in rural areas and to most handicapped children.

If the present unmet needs are alarming, the projected increase in demand for child care is critical. In less than four years—by 1990—the number of children cared for during the day by someone other than the parent will double, and two-thirds of all women will be working outside the home. Changes in the work force and family structure are largely responsible for this shift in traditional child care needs and services. The increase in single-parent families and in two-parent families in which both parents work outside the home is accompanied by a corresponding need for more day care resources:

- Nationally, only 11 percent of all families presently fit the traditional model in which the father works and the mother stays home to care for the children.
- In Tennessee, over 50 percent of mothers with children under six and over 60 percent of mothers with school-age children work outside the home.
- 70 percent of all single mothers work outside the home, and one in four mothers in the work force is head of a household and maintains her own family.
- 60 percent of men in the labor force have wives who work.
- 90 percent of working women will bear a child during their working careers.
- In less than 15 years both parents will be working in 80 percent of Tennessee families.

As these figures graphically indicate, the rapidly growing need for good, affordable, accessible day care is an important issue. It is also a factor that will increasingly affect employment opportunities and Tennessee's economic growth and prosperity. As employees, parents must have care for their children during working hours.

Consequently, the strength of the labor force and thus of Tennessee' businesses is contingent on the availability of adequate day care. The provision of good, affordable day care not only enhances an employer's ability to recruit and maintain a competent, stable work force, but also contributes to the desirability of Tennessee as a location for potential businesses.

Simple solutions will not suffice as a response to this complex problem. Day care is more than just a private, family matter. The task must be broadly defined to include not only the immediate need for child care, but also its wider implications for Tennessee's children, families, working parents, employers, and schools. The foremost issue is and must be the well-being of our children. It is also essential to recognize the direct relation of our children's well-being to the present and future quality of life in our communities across the state.

The work force is changing and so is the profile of the population itself. As a nation we are aging. The number of older people is growing in relation to the rest of the population while the number of children is decreasing. This changing nature of the population is another important reason to pay attention to the issue of day care. As the population ages, the work force begins to shrink. That smaller work force must be as bright and capable as they can be to maintain a strong economy and to care for their elders. The children of today are tomorrow's corporate and community leaders. As their number grows proportionately smaller, their responsibility becomes significantly greater.

The quality of the care our children receive in the early formative years is directly linked to their subsequent ability to participate in school, family, and social life as children, and it may determine to a large extent their ability to contribute as adults to society. Children whose parents work full-time spend more time in day care than they do with their parents. Good day care experiences can have a profound impact on the overall growth and development of these children. Good day care can make a crucial difference in the lives of children with special needs—those who are handicapped, abused, or economically disadvantaged. What we do now about day care can ensure that tomorrow's workers, parents, and community leaders will be ready to create the kind of future we all want for Tennessee.

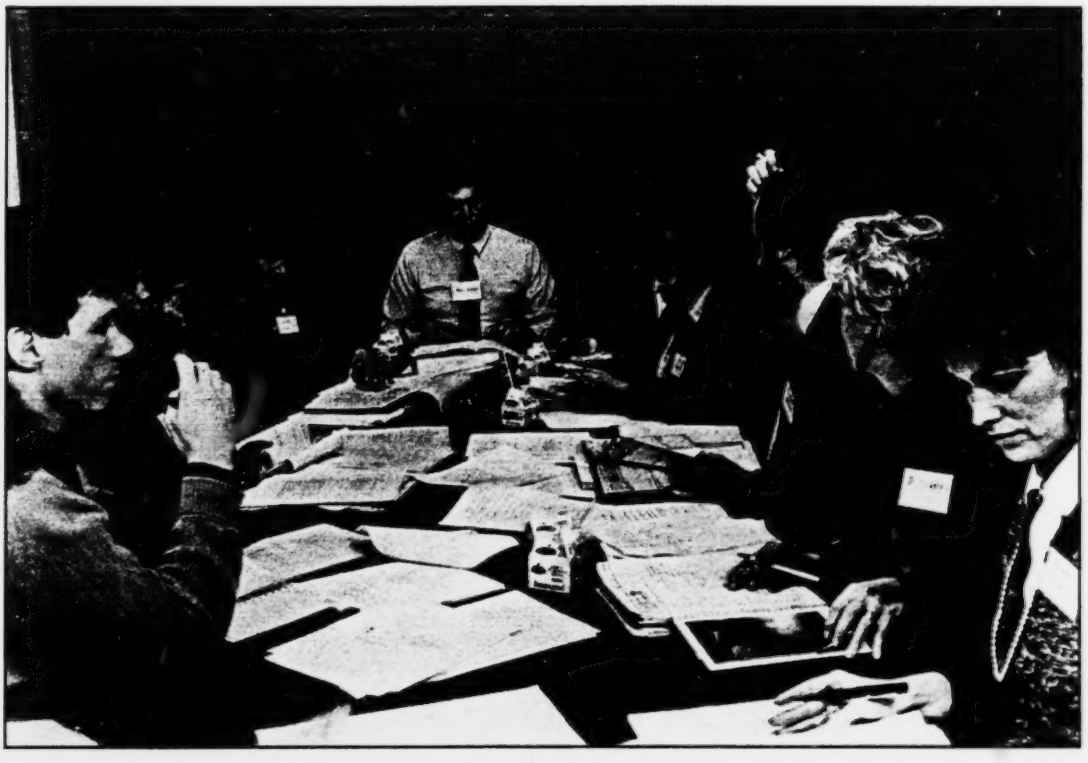
Advocacy for good day care becomes nothing less than advocacy for children and for our future.

The Governor's Task Force on Day Care

In response to the growing need for day care, Governor Lamar Alexander appointed a Governor's Task Force on Day Care in January 1986. He asked the task force to recommend ways to encourage the development of more and better day care opportunities for the children of Tennessee's working parents. He also charged the task force to help create 2,000 additional day care spaces by December 1986.

Co-chaired by the chief executive officers of two major corporations in Tennessee, the 42-member task force is comprised of representatives of private industry and state agencies as well as legislators, educators, day care providers, child advocates, and working parents.

In order to carry out its charge, the task force assessed the current availability of day care, identified areas of need, and recommended a comprehensive plan of action. From January through May 1986, members of the task force reviewed the current research and literature on day care, consulted with state and national experts, and held six public hearings across the state. Three primary issues were identified, and three committees were established to develop recommendations for review by the full task force:



Access to Day Care Committee. Chaired by a working parent, this committee identified what kinds of day care are particularly in short supply and developed recommendations on ways to improve the availability and accessibility of care.

Quality of Day Care Committee. Led by a specialist in child care and two commissioners, this committee examined issues related to parent involvement, provider training, and standards of care, and developed recommendations on ways to improve the quality of day care.

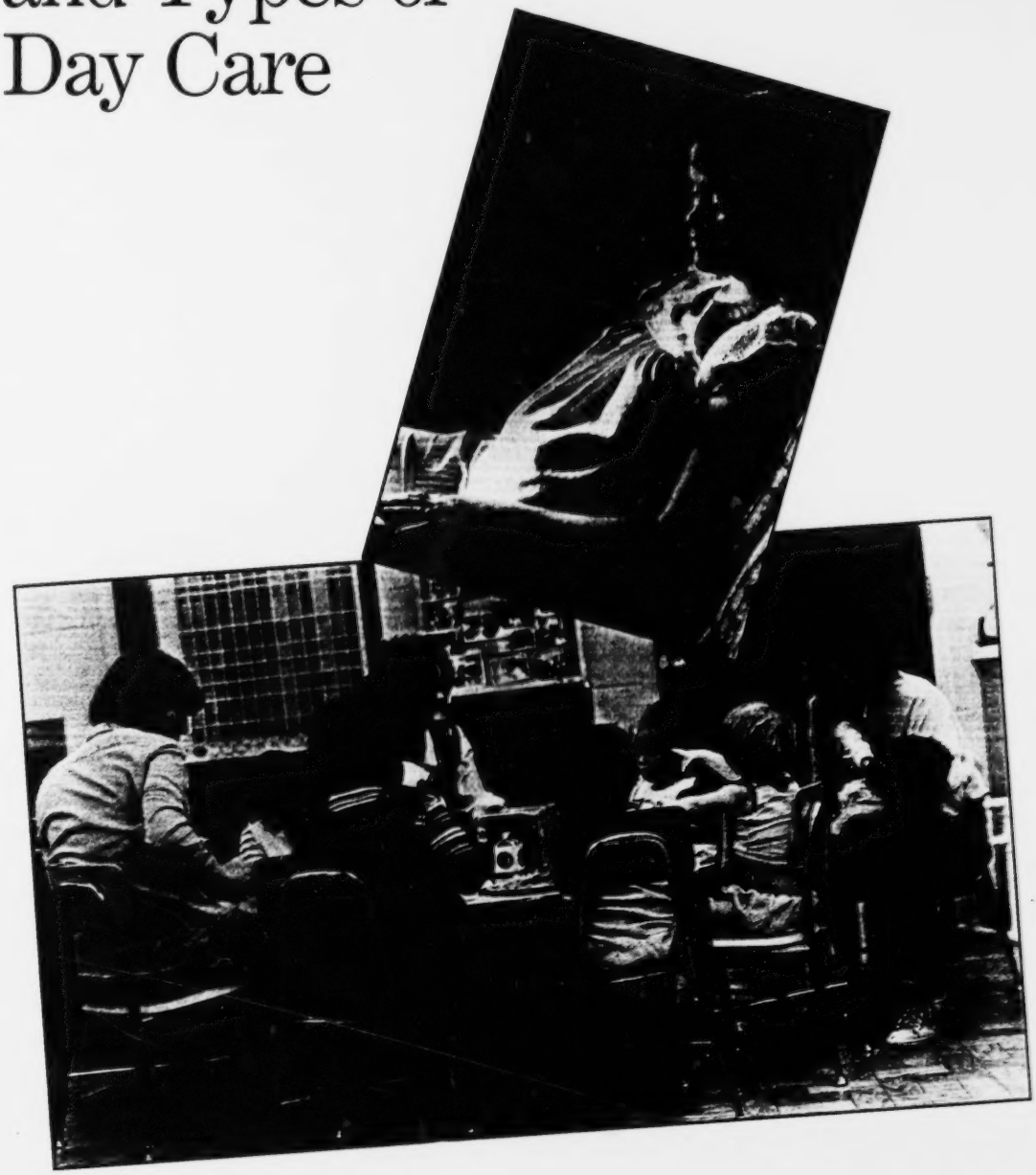
Employer Support for Day Care Committee. Chaired by two private industry representatives, this committee developed ways to encourage more awareness about day care among employers and more support for day care in both industry and small businesses.

Throughout the month of March 1986, six public hearings were held across the state to give the task force an opportunity to learn firsthand about these issues and the needs of urban and rural Tennessee. Hearings were held from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to allow the working community to testify. The 188 spokespersons at these public forums included business leaders, elected officials, day care providers, those who inspect and license day care facilities, child development professionals, representatives of labor unions, employee groups, Chambers of Commerce, as well as working parents, welfare recipients, school officials, community leaders, child advocates, and volunteer groups.

In May the task force discussed and revised the recommendations of the three committees. In June the task force finalized its report for presentation to Governor Alexander with implementation recommended to begin in July. Following is a synopsis of the findings and recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Day Care.

Day Care Services in Tennessee

Availability and Types of Day Care



Parents meet their needs for child care in a variety of ways including formal programs that are licensed or approved by the State as well as informal arrangements with individuals who are not required to have a license. Accordingly, day care facilities are categorized in three types: unlicensed, licensed, and approved.

UNLICENSED DAY CARE

Approximately 85 percent of all parents use relatives, either in their homes or in the parents' home, to take care of their children. Still others have a neighbor who cares for children in an informal family day care home arrangement. These two types of care are not required to be licensed if the number of children cared for is limited to four in addition to those related to the caregiver. Other types of care arrangements that are legally exempt from licensure include religious-sponsored "Parents' Day Out" programs, religious/parochial school-sponsored programs, bona fide kindergarten programs and drop-in care programs.

LICENSED DAY CARE AGENCIES

There are three types of licensed day care agencies: family day care homes, group day care homes, and day care centers.

Family day care homes. These programs are usually based in the caregiver's home and typically serve five to seven children per caregiver. Family day care homes can be operated individually by a private owner or as a satellite of a larger agency. There are currently 348 licensed family day care homes in Tennessee, all of which are evaluated annually by the Department of Human Services.

Group day care homes. These programs are usually operated by a private owner in the owner's home and serve eight to twelve children. Depending on the ages of the children served, there are one to three caregivers. The group day care home can be operated as a satellite of a larger agency. The licensing evaluation of these programs includes inspections by the fire safety and health inspectors. There are currently 239 licensed group day care homes in Tennessee.

Day care centers. These licensed or approved agencies provide care for thirteen or more children in a private home or a facility designed or adapted for day care purposes. This category includes agencies such as preschools, nursery schools, kindergartens, and child development centers. There are currently 1,423 licensed or approved day care centers in Tennessee.

APPROVED DAY CARE AGENCIES

Two types of agencies are approved by the Department of Human Services:

Approved family day care homes. These programs are contracted by the Department of Human Services to provide care for children receiving public assistance or social services. The homes can serve up to seven children, but are normally limited to four. The more than fifty approved family day care homes in the state must comply with the same requirements as licensed family day care homes.

Approved public agencies. These day care programs are operated by public agencies that by law are not required to be licensed but are required to be evaluated and approved by the Department of Human Services.

The Role of State Government

The responsibility for maintaining the health, safety, and quality of existing day care services is shared among five state departments in Tennessee.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Department of Human Services has the primary governmental responsibility for day care programs in Tennessee. Federal and state funds support the two major departmental activities—regulation of day care and the provision of services to low-income or certain high-risk families.

The regulatory function includes two components: licensure/approval and training/technical assistance to help agencies meet licensing requirements and provide better services. Licensing is the responsibility of twelve regional offices, currently having a staff of 48 full-time and part-time counselors and supervisors. Training and technical assistance are currently provided by three full-time and one part-time state office staff members, with support from the field staff.

Day care services for low-income families are provided by the Department of Human Services by group contract and vendor day care programs. These services are provided to qualifying families on a sliding fee scale, the upper limit of which is 70 percent of the state's median income. In addition, day care services are provided to certain high-risk families whose children are at risk for abuse or neglect.

OTHER STATE DEPARTMENTS

The following departments also have some role in providing day care services in Tennessee:

Department of Commerce and Insurance conducts fire safety inspections of some group day care homes and day care centers.

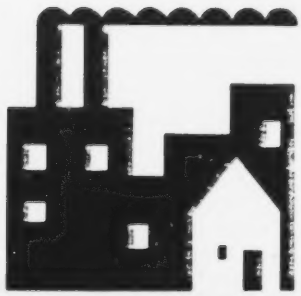
Department of Education sponsors some pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs. In addition, space is provided in many public schools for preschool and school-age day care programs.

Department of Health and Environment conducts inspections of group day care homes and day care centers for environmental sanitation through staff in county health departments. In addition, representatives of this department provide DHS staff with consultation on the immunization program, nutrition services, tuberculosis control, and child safety.

Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation partially with Medicaid funding, operates eleven therapeutic nurseries across the state for abused and disturbed children. In addition, day care services are available for children with developmental disabilities in nine programs across the state.

While the state cannot provide services for all of Tennessee's children, the enormity and complexity of the problem dictates that leadership for the development and coordination of a strategic long-range plan must come from state government.

Background, Findings, and Recommendations



Background, Findings, and Recommendations

The findings and recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Day Care focus on the three primary issues studied by the task force committees—the problem of access to day care, the importance of quality of day care, and the need for employer support for day care. This section of the report includes general background information, findings, supporting material, and specific recommendations.

A Key Issue: Access to Day Care

BACKGROUND

The inability to find good, affordable day care is a major problem for Tennessee's working parents. Day care options are often limited and are influenced by a number of factors such as financial considerations, parental preferences, educational background, cultural norms, location, and convenience. Primarily because of the cost and availability factors, parents often use as many as four different child care arrangements in one week, thereby disrupting the continuity and stability necessary for healthy child development.

For many families, a primary obstacle to good day care is the high cost. Most working parents spend approximately ten percent of their budget on day care, the fourth largest budget item after housing, food, and taxes. Research by The Conference Board, a business research organization in New York, indicates that out-of-home care for one child costs from $1,500 to $10,000 per year, with most parents paying around $3,000 annually or $250 per month. In Tennessee that figure is around $2,000 annually or $170 monthly. The high cost of quality day care affects all parents, but it is disproportionately difficult for low-income families and teen mothers.

Because day care is a service-oriented, labor-intensive business, the costs incurred by the day care provider also affect the availability of good child care. Parents usually pay only about 70 percent of the actual cost of day care services. The average annual operating cost per child is about $2,400, and it can be as high as $5,000.

The recent liability insurance shortage has had major impact on the cost of day care. Many providers are unable to obtain adequate coverage, and the cost to those who do is approximately three times as great as it was just two years ago. This problem is even greater for day care homes than for day care centers. A recent survey of Tennessee providers found that 29 are operating without liability coverage, and several intend to close for this reason.

Another major problem affecting access is the lack of resource and referral services across much of the state. Parents often have considerable difficulty finding appropriate, quality day care. Unlicensed care in the home of providers who care for four or fewer children is preferable to many parents of infants and toddlers, but locating such providers is largely a matter of informal networking.

Other barriers which limit access and availability include restrictions on the use of public school buildings, compatibility of fire and safety regulations, zoning ordinances and restrictions, licensure standards and other regulations, as well as the lack of public awareness about needs and cost.

The lack of good child care is particularly acute in certain areas of Tennessee and for certain groups of children. Their needs are described below.

INFANTS AND TODDLERS

In 1985, the Tennessee Children's Services Commission estimated that 95,000 infants and toddlers in Tennessee needed day care, but only 14,800 or 15 percent were reported to be in licensed care. Nationally and on the state level, 75 percent of all calls to resource and referral services and day care agencies are requests for infant care services.

GEOGRAPHIC NEEDS

Most licensed care is located in the four metropolitan areas of the state, with the largest growth centered in the upper Middle Tennessee area. In the four urban centers, 935 facilities provide care for 56,919 children, while the rest of the state has 1,061 facilities with 37,269 children in care.

Eighty percent of the care in Middle Tennessee is in Nashville and surrounding counties. Regional totals are charted below.

	Number of Facilities	Number of Children Served
East Tennessee	659	31,280
Middle Tennessee	865	35,060
West Tennessee	486	29,311
Total	2,010	95,651

The distribution of child care in rural counties ranges from nonexistent to grossly inadequate. Many rural counties have no licensed day care with the exception of Head Start programs, which have limited hours and should not be considered day care services.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

One of the greatest needs for child care in Tennessee is that of before- and after-school care, including summer and holiday care. Although 60 percent of the mothers of school-age children work outside the home, less than 5 percent of the 448,000 Tennessee children aged 5 through 11 years are receiving care in licensed day care facilities. There are an estimated 65,000-90,000 "latch-key children" in Tennessee who are in self-care. The actual number is not available because of parents' reluctance to admit that their children are left alone.

Although some older children may be mature enough to handle the circumstances that arise when left alone, most children, regardless of age, need supervision by a responsible adult. Children who are at home alone are potentially placed in situations which require decision-making abilities beyond their maturity level. Research shows that self-care, particularly for "the most vulnerable children (low-income, minority, urban), has negative effects on adjustment, school achievement and self-image" (Seligson, et al., 1983).

Several school systems in Tennessee sponsor before- and after-school programs. Most of these programs are housed in public school facilities and are operated by the school system, a parent-cooperative, or a contract agency such as the YMCA. In addition, a number of private agencies, such as churches, provide school-age care.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

In Tennessee there are about 59,000 handicapped children under age 13, of whom 14,000 are preschool age. In the fiscal year ending June 1985, only 710 handicapped children were enrolled in licensed day care agencies, and only 31 licensed agencies provided full-time care for the handicapped. The cost is greater for providing day care to handicapped children, and few providers are properly trained to meet their special needs.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1

Many low-income families cannot afford the cost of quality day care. Currently day care public assistance for low-income families is inadequate.

Since day care is a labor-intensive, service-oriented business, its low profit margin reduces its attractiveness to potential providers. Day care programs that are available must charge appropriate fees, but even those often cover only 70 percent of actual cost. The impact of cost affects most parents and providers, but it is particularly acute for low-income families, single parents, teen parents, and parents of children with special needs—and for providers who serve these populations. Tax credits and flexible benefit plans do not help these economically marginal families.

Many parents cannot afford to purchase quality day care services and must often accept less desirable arrangements for their children. Financial resources from both the public and private sectors are needed to increase access and availability. Employers, United Way organizations, nonprofit agencies, private foundations, as well as state government all have a significant role to play in contributing to the expansion of day care services, particularly for low-income families.

Recommendation No. 1

1a. The State, United Way organizations, and other interested groups should expand assistance to low-income families by increasing the availability of subsidized quality day care.

1b. The State's reimbursement to providers serving low-income families should more closely approximate the actual cost of care.

1c. The State should study the feasibility of a voucher program and other creative options for low-income families. Such programs could improve access to day care for all low-income families, particularly those in rural areas.

1d. Churches, synagogues, employers, United Way organizations, and civic groups should be encouraged to provide day care scholarships for children of low-income families.

Finding No. 2

More infant and toddler care is needed.

Currently, day care services are available to only one in five infants and toddlers who need care. Cost is the major factor that determines the limited availability for this age group. Infant/toddler care is one of the most expensive types of service because it requires low provider/child ratios, and is more labor-intensive than most other types of care. Many parents cannot afford to pay the full cost of infant and toddler care, nor can most providers afford to offer it without subsidy.

Many parents feel that the family day care home setting is preferable for children of this age. However, this type of service is difficult to locate because it does not have to be licensed, and unlicensed providers are not included in most resource and referral listings.

In order to foster the expansion of day care for infants and toddlers, efforts should be made to increase financial support, sponsorship, and visibility of providers who work with this age group.

Recommendation No. 2

2a. To increase the availability of quality day care, more infant and toddler day care providers should be recruited and trained. Schools, churches, synagogues, day care agencies, employers, and other community agencies should be encouraged to sponsor infant and toddler programs.

2b. To improve access to family day care homes, a voluntary directory or registry should be established. Criteria for inclusion in the registry should be defined and made available to parents.

2c. The model of family day care homes as satellites of new or existing agencies should be promoted.

Finding No. 3

More before- and after-school care is needed for school-age children.

Approximately 65,000-90,000 elementary school-age children are presently unattended before and after school while their parents work. These same children often must care for themselves during the summer months and on school holidays as well. Most children in this age group need supervision as well as opportunities to participate in activities that will stimulate their emotional, social, and intellectual development. Age-appropriate care is important to children of all ages. It is especially important for upper-elementary and junior high school children because of their growing need for independence and their resistance to the stigma of babysitting.

The use of local school facilities is an attractive option because of the convenience and continuity that such a solution offers. Three models for providing on-site care for school-age children have proven successful in Tennessee.

The school-sponsored program is operated under the aegis of the local board and principal, to whom the director reports. Limited to children who attend the school, the program is financed by parent fees.

The parent-cooperative program operates under the direction of a parent governing board with the consent of the local school board and principal. This model is also supported by parent fees.

The third-party program is sponsored and operated through a local non-profit organization, such as the YMCA, which is responsible for the program's governance and administration. This program operates at the discretion of the school board and principal, and is funded by parent fees.

Recommendation No. 3

3a. All schools, both public and private, should be encouraged to provide or make facilities available for on-site, year-round day care programs for school-age children.

3b. Special programs with age-appropriate activities should be developed to meet the needs of older school-age children.

Finding No. 4

There is no comprehensive planning for day care service delivery in Tennessee, and there is a lack of coordination among agencies responsible for day care services.

Day care issues that involve cooperative effort will not be addressed in a comprehensive fashion unless a single agency is responsible for overall leadership, planning, and coordination. Better planning is crucial for the equitable distribution of day care resources in Tennessee. For example, coordination is needed to enable architects, developers, planners, and others involved in economic development to support the expansion of day care services. The research, development, and cultivation of financial resources, including private foundations, could also be carried out more effectively at the state level. In addition, technical assistance is needed to acquaint providers with fund raising techniques, potential sources of financial assistance, and program development. Advocacy and marketing of expanded day care to existing providers, such as religious and health care organizations, could best be targeted to regional and state professional associations of those groups. Available public dollars for day care could also be better utilized through statewide planning.

For these reasons, a single agency should assume responsibility for developing these initiatives and responding to emerging day care needs across Tennessee.

Recommendation No. 4

4. The Department of Human Services should establish a day care planning office to be responsible for the following:

    - long-range planning including statewide community needs assessments
    - facilitating coordination among state, regional, and local service and planning agencies
    - providing support services for grant application and presentation
    - ensuring the equitable distribution of day care resources for low-income families

Finding No. 5

More care for handicapped children of all ages is needed.

Although there are almost 60,000 handicapped children in Tennessee, only 710 were enrolled in licensed day care agencies in 1985. Access to day care for these children is limited not only because of cost, but also because providers lack the necessary education or training to meet the special needs of handicapped children. Such training is needed not only to improve the quality of services to handicapped children, but also to improve screening for handicapping conditions and developmental disabilities.

Most providers also need information about the assistance and incentives available to those who care for handicapped children. This will increase their confidence in the economic and programmatic feasibility of offering services to children with special needs.

Recommendation No. 5

5a. To encourage more day care providers to serve handicapped children, technical asssistance and training about the special needs of handicapped children should be made available.

5b. The State should increase the level of reimbursement to day care providers who serve handicapped children from low-income families.

5c. Programs currently serving handicapped children, such as Head Start, should expand their hours to provide full-day service to meet the needs of working parents.

5d. Churches, synagogues, employers, civic groups, and schools should be encouraged to provide day care scholarships or assistance for handicapped children.

Finding No. 6

Parents need assistance in locating appropriate, quality day care.

In Tennessee the five known resource and referral services in operation have limited service areas. Available information about child care programs and services is incomplete and inadequate for purposes of both referral and planning in most of the state. Many parents have difficulty securing any type of care, and the choices of all parents are limited by the lack of information about the location, type, cost, and quality of services in their area. More referral services would benefit providers who have limited ways and means of advertising their services.

Further, this lack of data constricts efforts to assess needs, identify gaps in service, plan for the future, and involve the community in developing new day care resources. Tennessee parents, providers, and communities would all benefit from more adequate resource and referral services.

Recommendation No. 6

The Department of Human Services should develop a statewide network of resource and referral services. Parent education about quality day care should be an important component of this service.

Finding No. 7

The day care needs of teen parents are of special concern. The children of teen parents are a high-risk group for health and social problems.

One of five births in Tennessee is to a teen mother. In 1984, there were 16,424 teen pregnancies. Of the pregnant teens under age 18, about 80 percent never finish high school, many because they cannot arrange child care for their children. The implications for these young parents and their children can be far reaching. Without an education the teen mother's future is bleak. Economic independence will be impossible. In fact, in Tennessee 60 percent of all welfare (AFDC) clients are either teen mothers themselves or were the result of a teenage pregnancy.

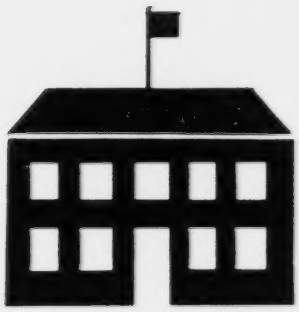
The needs of these young parents and their children must be addressed by policy makers. Affordable, quality day care is needed not only to allow teen mothers to complete their training or education, but also to ensure that their children receive proper protection and care. In addition, many teen parents need special training in child development and parenting skills in order to assume the responsibilities of early parenthood.

Recommendation No. 7

7a. School systems and agencies serving teen parents should be encouraged to provide or expand classes in effective parenting skills.

7b. Schools with high pregnancy rates should be encouraged to offer on-site day care programs to enable teen parents to complete their education, and learn child development and effective parenting skills.

7c. Child development courses in the schools should be expanded to include practicum components through which students can gain vocational experience while staffing day care services for the children of teen parents.



A Key Issue: Quality of Day Care

BACKGROUND

Since young children spend an average of 2,000 hours a year in day care, the quality of that experience in the formative years can have profound impact on their growth and development. A White House Conference on Children determined the lack of *quality* day care to be the nation's greatest child care problem.

In 1986, at public hearings held across the state by the Governor's Task Force on Day Care, Tennesseans came forward to say that quality day care is still the most pressing issue facing many families. Concern about quality care is being expressed in many other settings as well. Educators, employers, community leaders, and parents are all voicing concern regarding the importance of the quality of day care.

Children need more than custodial care that meets minimum needs for nutritious food and a clean, safe environment. Quality day care not only provides for these needs, but also contributes to the child's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development. Its impact extends far beyond the immediate effect on the child and family. Quality day care can enhance later life achievement particularly for economically disadvantaged children. Those who have had quality day care benefit from experiences that encourage the development of social, intellec-

tual, and problem-solving skills. They enter school better prepared, with greater confidence, and with a true head start.

Many variables influence the quality of day care. The size of the children's groups is perhaps the most important determinant of quality. When groups are too large, children are not given the supervision and attention they need. Learning cannot take place and safety may in fact be jeopardized. Appropriate adult/child ratios can ensure and enhance quality.

The stability, continuity, and capabilities of day care staff also affect the quality of care. Children need a constant, predictable environment. Frequent staff turnover, which results in interaction with too many adults, adversely affects the overall development of children. In addition, the educational training the caregivers have received has a tremendous influence on the quality of the care. Proper training and on-going opportunities for additional staff development can ensure that a program offers true early childhood education rather than mere babysitting services.

Quality day care programs have well-developed curricula which are appropriate to the children's age and developmental levels. Without such curricula the children may be merely exposed to supervised play, perhaps excessive television, or at best a series of unconnected activities that do little to influence their development. Quality care utilizes age-appropriate equipment and materials for optimum learning and safe, developmentally meaningful play.

Finally, parental involvement can make a significant contribution to quality child care. Most quality programs actively involve parents in their service. This enables parents to learn more about their child's developmental needs and to assist the agency or caregiver in assessing the quality and effectiveness of services being provided. The more parents and the public know about quality child care, the more significant can be the improvements in the quality of care.

In Tennessee basic day care licensing standards have been strengthened. These standards represent the minimal operating level for day care facilities legally to operate in Tennessee. While compliance with standards alone does not ensure high quality, the new standards represent a signficant improvement. They will, for the first time, require caregivers to obtain in-service training. The standards will also call for better screening of new employees, better parent/center communication, and improvements in staff/child ratios and group sizes. However, more incentives are needed to encourage providers to exceed these standards.

The elderly population can provide valuable, supplemental resources in our efforts to improve the quality of day care. Senior citizens could help staff day care centers on a part-time or volunteer basis thereby helping improve the important staff/child ratio. Our young children would in fact be enriched by such opportunities for more time with the elderly.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children, a professional organization with 50,000 members, has established a center accreditation program to recognize truly outstanding programs. At present over 700 programs across the country, including some in Tennessee, have begun the rigorous process of accreditation. This program will facilitate identification and recognition of exemplary programs within the state.

All of these desirable improvements in quality will be costly. Unless we take steps now to maintain quality care as a priority, financial pressures and the need for expanded access will erode the gains made thus far. By the year 2000, many experts believe the role of the public education system will be expanded increasingly into day care for school-age children. With proper planning we can maintain the strengths of the current system while reaping new benefits from the expansion of the education system. In the more immediate future we must guard against the adverse effects of reduced federal funding for day care for low-income families. Without strong action, many children will be denied quality child care and will be left to depend on informal arrangements or self-care.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1

The general public, parents, and providers need a better understanding of what constitutes quality day care.

Widespread public misunderstanding of what constitutes quality day care results in the selection of lower quality services by parents as well as employers who support day care. Because parents frequently rely on hearsay for information and referral, they may be unaware of the range of options available to them. They especially need information about how to look for and access quality. Further, many parents and providers are unaware of the correlation between active parent involvement and high quality care. While most providers do not actively discourage parent participation, they often fail to invite it. Many parents consequently avoid involvement because of fears that they will be seen as intrusive. In addition, providers have no clear role models after which to pattern themselves and need guidelines and assistance in order to develop high quality programs.

Recommendation No. 1

1a. Model programs, in which innovative methods and materials can be demonstrated, should be recognized or developed.

1b. Ongoing efforts to increase community awareness and to promote parent education about issues affecting the quality of day care services should be conducted by a variety of organizations.

1c. Day care providers should be encouraged to seek opportunities for productive parental involvement. To ensure the quality of care their children receive, parents should be encouraged to become more involved with their children's day care programs.

Finding No. 2

Day care providers need more training in child care and business skills.

Research indicates that proper training of providers is essential to quality child care. The delivery of quality care is contingent on the services of providers who understand the developmental, social, psychological, and intellectual needs of children of various levels and stages. However, current licensing standards require that caregivers have only a minimal education and very limited training.

Most child care providers in Tennessee have completed high school, and some have finished college. However, many providers of both educational levels lack child development or early childhood expertise. In addition, most providers do not receive on-going training because of limited access, costs, and the demanding nature of their jobs.

Although most day care programs are small businesses, providers often lack training in business skills such as budgeting, planning, marketing, and management. Expertise in these areas could enhance efficiency, and enable more providers to survive and flourish.

Recommendation No. 2

2a. The Tennessee Department of Human Services should hire additional professional staff to expand training for child care providers. Training staff should assist providers in utilizing community training opportunities available through high schools, colleges, universities, professional alliances, health care organizations, and other agencies.

2b. The Tennessee Department of Human Services should maintain a state-of-the-art learning resource center for use by providers.

2c. The business community should be encouraged to offer workshops to day care providers to enhance their business skills.

Finding No. 3

Reductions in federal or state funding available for day care will adversely affect the quality and availability of day care for low-income families.

Most federally subsidized day care for low-income families in Tennessee is funded through the Social Services Block Grant. Efforts to reduce the federal deficit could force major cutbacks in the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). Day care funding represents 28.9 percent of all contract services funded by the SSBG in Tennessee. If these funds are reduced, it will adversely affect the number of subsidized spaces available for low-income families. Without subsidized care, many of these families will resort to informal arrangements that do not offer the quality and safeguards of a licensed program.

Recommendation No. 3

The State should take the lead in seeking to replace federal funds for day care services that are lost due to federal budget reductions.

Finding No. 4

Incentives are needed to upgrade the quality of day care.

Tennessee's day care licensing standards represent only a minimal level of acceptable care and do not ensure quality. There are no substantive incentives for providers to exceed these standards, and providers who excel receive no formal recognition.

Further, many quality providers cannot afford to contract with the State for the care of low-income children because the level of subsidized reimbursement is inadequate. The fee paid by the Department of Human Services for the care of a child in a family day care home is $27.50 per week and $30.00 per week in a day care center. This level has not been increased since January 1, 1981. In Tennessee, the average fee for care of infants is estimated to be $50.00 per week and $45.00 per week for preschool-age children.

Recommendation No. 4

4a. A formal incentive system should be developed to encourage day care providers to exceed the required minimal standards. Agencies that meet measurable performance criteria for quality should be formally recognized.

4b. As an incentive for providers who serve low-income families, the State should set a higher level of reimbursement for those who meet measurable performance criteria for quality.

Finding No. 5

Improvements in the regulation of day care are needed.

Standards regulating day care are inconsistently applied and enforced across the state because of inadequate staff resources and the conflicting requirements of various regulatory agencies.

There are presently 36 day care licensing counselors who are responsible for licensing over 2,000 agencies. The average ratio of counselors to agencies statewide is 1 to 56, and in some regions the caseload of counselors includes as many as 70 agencies. In 1985, counselors were unable to conduct the required number of site visits due to other demands. The General Assembly approved seven additional positions for the fiscal year 1986-87 to improve the ratio of counselors to agencies. However, the projected increase in licensed day care agencies will result in a new caseload imbalance if more positions are not added to the staff.

The difficulty of consistent enforcement is further complicated by the involvement of multiple agencies with separate requirements. The regulations of the various agencies duplicate and contradict each other. These conflicting requirements are confusing to providers for whom compliance is often cumbersome and costly.

Recommendation No. 5

5a. The Department of Human Services should maintain a staff of licensing counselors to ensure that the ratio of counselors to agencies does not exceed 1 to 40.

5b. Enforcement of the day care licensing standards should be stronger and more consistent.

5c. The various agencies that regulate day care should more effectively coordinate their activities in order to improve consistency, avoid duplication, and make it easier for day care providers to become licensed.

Finding No. 6

Because the education system impacts all children, its contribution to the development of a systematic approach to providing day care is crucial.

According to nationally recognized experts on programs for young children, the provision of day care in the public schools is an inevitable development. *Strengthening Families* by Nicholas Hobbs et al, identifies the need for the education system to play a central role in ensuring the provision of day care and other services for all children and families. Toward that end, it is important that the professional expertise and resources of educators be utilized in designing a comprehensive child care system. They can ensure continuity with the educational system and develop programs that meet the educational and developmental needs of children of various ages. If quality is to be attained, the involvement of educators is essential in working to meet the day care needs of children across Tennessee.

Recommendation No. 6

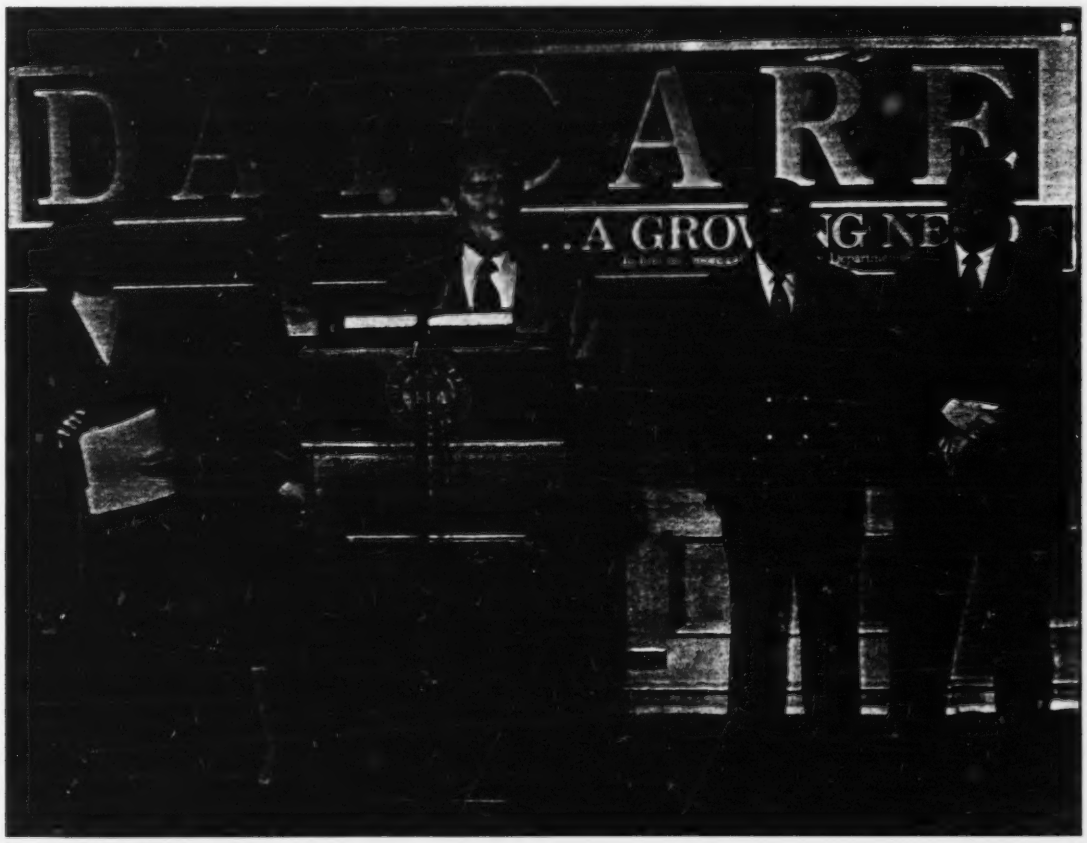
Education policy makers should provide leadership for long-range planning of quality day care for children of all ages. Educators should provide technical assistance for the design of developmentally appropriate day care programs. Educators should help to extend the child care network through schools and other community agencies.

A Key Issue: Employer Support for Day Care

BACKGROUND

Employer involvement in day care is imaginative, important, and increasing. Since 1982, the number of companies in the country providing assistance to working parents has grown from 600 to 2,500. This increase in employer support can be attributed to the many benefits associated with the provision of day care services.

These benefits for the employer include reduced absenteeism and turnover, increased productivity, improved employee morale, recruitment advantages, and enhancement of the employer's reputation in the community. According to a 1983 study conducted by the American Management Association, "the need to attract a talented, stable work force" is the primary incentive for employer involvement in day care. The study found that recruitment considerations outweighed tax benefit incentives as a priority to employers.



There are many options for employers who wish to support the day care needs of their employees. These options include, but are not limited to:

Flexible personnel policies. Generous maternity/paternity leave, sick-child leave, flex time, job sharing, and at-home work are examples of policies which are supportive of families.

Information programs. A resource and referral service, parent seminars or parent education programs, parent counseling services—all provide working parents with the information they need to make wise child care decisions.

Financial assistance. Direct assistance to parent-employees can take the form of discounts or subsidies to defray the cost of child care. Under the federal Dependent Care Assistance Plan, some costs of child care are considered tax-free benefits. Methods of financial assistance include the following:

- A **vendor program** allows the employer to purchase slots at a local day care center and sell them to employees at a discount.
- A **voucher system** allows the parent to select the day care program and then submit a voucher to the employer for payment of all or part of the fee.
- A **flexible benefits plan** allows parents to choose a child care program as an option in a benefits package. Child care can be selected from a "menu" of available benefits.
- A **voluntary employee benefit program** allows an employer to establish a special spending account for dependent care for parent employees funded by salary reduction. Thus, the employees' taxable income is reduced, and there is no cost to the employer.
- A **cash (or in-kind) donation** may be made to local child care agencies.

Direct services. Some examples of direct child care services that employers can provide are:

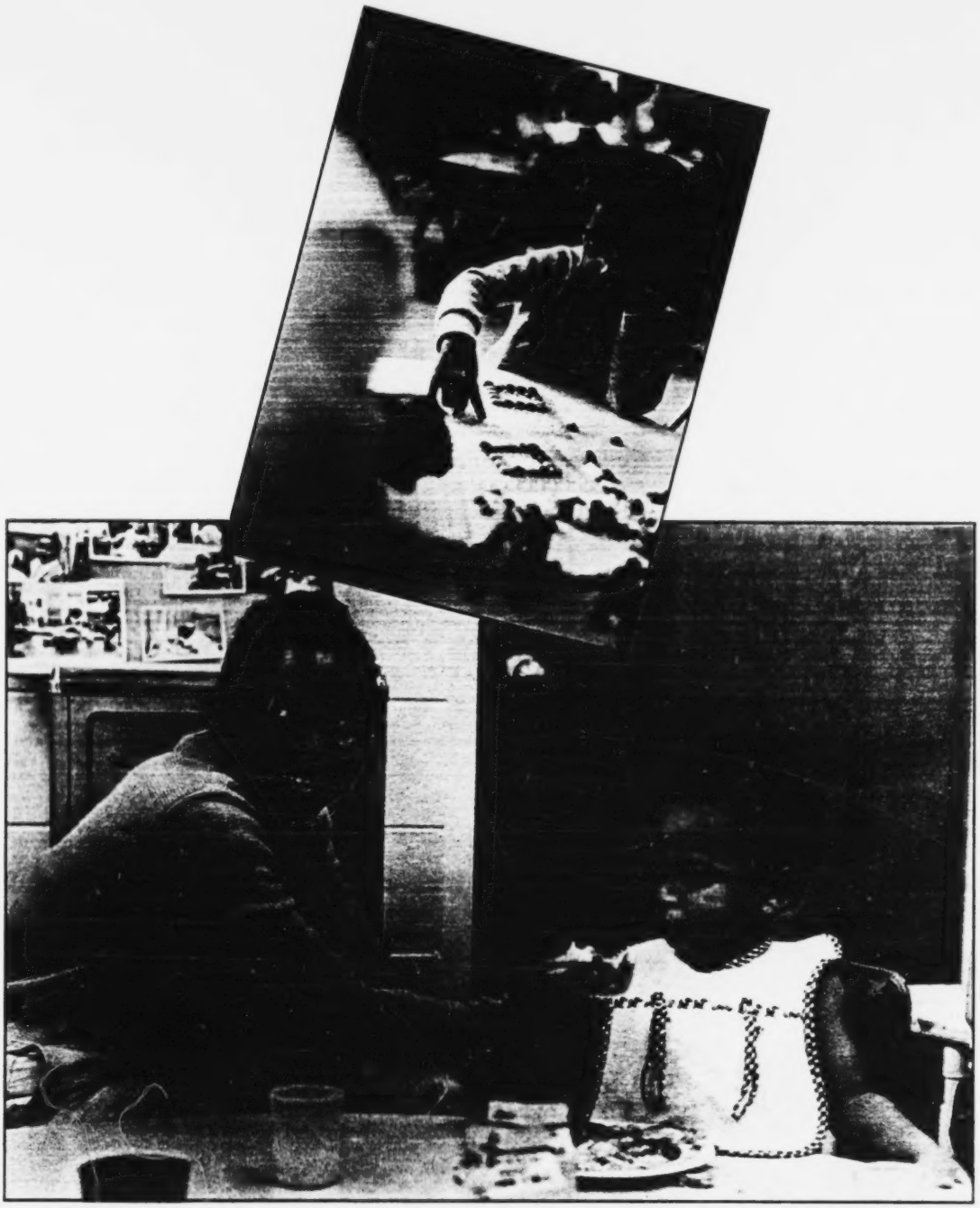
- **On- or near-site day care centers,** operated by the employer or a consortium of employers or provided through a contractual arrangement.
- **Donation of space** to be used to house day care facilities.
- **A system of family day care homes** in which the employer supervises the care of children in several family day care homes is less expensive than operating a day care center.

According to studies of companies providing child care assistance, the following observations have been made:

Size. Size of the company does not have a significant bearing on whether or not a company chooses to provide child care assistance. Companies with more than 1,000 employees are more likely to start on-site centers. One study, however, examined 204 employer-supported programs and found that 69 of them were in companies with fewer than 150 employees. Because 70 percent of new jobs are in enterprises employing fewer than 500, any efforts to involve employers in child care initiatives must include small businesses.

Location. The 1982 Appalachian Regional Commission study found that 60 percent of all employers who provide day care support are located in urban areas. All the employer-supported programs in Tennessee at the present time are in the four large metropolitan areas. In several nonurban communities, however, attention is now being given to day care needs and options for employer support.

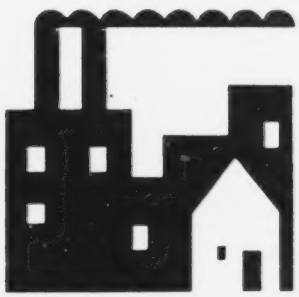
Benefits. The benefits of employer-supported day care are well documented—for example, reduced absenteeism, less turnover, increased productivity. In a recent survey of employers who provide support for child care, 100 percent of those who responded felt the benefits of providing these services far outweighed the cost.



There are many factors that limit the involvement of employers in day care. Of the negative influences, the most common are the perception of day care as a personal or family matter, fear of alienating nonparent employees, and misunderstanding about the range and cost of available options. In addition, the limited availability and high cost of liability insurance are major barriers to many employers. To counteract these influences, educational and informational materials and programs should be a key component in efforts to increase employer support.

Despite reluctance on the part of some employers, the momentum for employer support is growing because of the benefits that are being realized. Forecasts for the future indicate that "child care costs will increasingly affect the cost of labor and nature of fringe benefits plans" (National Governor's Association, 1985).

In addition, many employers today wish to be seen as responsible members of the community, who care about the quality of life of their employees and the strength of the community. It is, therefore, to the benefit of employers, employees, and the community at large to have business leaders participate in meeting the growing need for more and better day care.



FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1

There is a lack of awareness among employers in Tennessee about the importance of quality day care for today's work force.

Although many businesses in Tennessee are beginning to recognize the importance of developing policies and programs supportive of day care, there are currently only 20 businesses that provide day care services for their employees. This lack of involvement can be attributed to a widespread lack of awareness of both the need for day care and its tangible benefits to employers. The continued presence of a stable, productive work force is contingent on the availability of day care services. If the current trend of strong economic growth in Tennessee continues, the need for quality day care will continue to increase. The creation of new jobs will be accompanied by a need for more day care, in addition to the growing need expected to result from changes in the work force and family structure.

This problem can only be addressed by active, imaginative leadership from the Tennessee business community. Consequently, the development of an informed business constituency is essential for a successful plan of action. Potential members of this constituency should be identified, cultivated, and educated about the need for and tangible benefits of employer support. Target audiences should include leadership of current and new businesses and corporations, as well as Chambers of Commerce, business associations, and civic leadership programs.

Recommendation No. 1

1a. Statewide activities should be sponsored to increase employer awareness about the importance of quality day care.

1b. Information about day care should be provided to new and existing businesses through the Department of Economic and Community Development and local business and community leaders, including Chambers of Commerce, the offices of mayors and county executives, and local planning offices.

1c. Local decision makers, such as developers, community planners, and zoning boards, should be encouraged to include day care facilities in their plans for future developments.

Finding No. 2

More employers need to be encouraged to provide support for quality day care.

Although solutions to this complex problem must be the product of a public/private partnership, the State should take the leadership role in developing and implementing a comprehensive plan for encouraging employer support for day care in Tennessee. Employers cannot be expected to respond favorably and substantively unless they are first persuaded of the need among their employees, the demonstrated feasibility of a broad range of service options, and the tangible benefits that will accrue from their support. State government should assume the primary responsibility for recruiting and educating employers, as well as giving recognition to employers who act as model corporate citizens in this area.

Recommendation No. 2

2a. Employers need to be recruited to support day care in their companies or in their communities. Those employers who make commitments should be recognized.

2b. Information should be developed on the full range of options for employer involvement, including:
- resource and referral service
- flexible benefits, including day care
- voucher program
- consortium for day care with other employers
- on-site day care
- arrangements with community day care facilities

2c. The Department of Human Services should develop a clearinghouse of information on employer-supported day care activities in Tennessee. The availability of this service should be publicized and the information distributed periodically.

Finding No. 3

As the largest employer in Tennessee, state government should be a role model for other employers by providing support for quality day care for state employees.

The State is the largest employer in Tennessee, employing more than 36,000 people in government service. In its role as employer, the State has a responsibility to set the standard for employer support of day care. The State should support the day care needs of their employees, where feasible, and should evaluate and refine its personnel policies and procedures to reflect a commitment to working parents and their children.

Recommendation No. 3

3a. State government should sponsor a pilot project to serve state employees. This project should be designed as a high-quality, comprehensive program that can serve as a model demonstration project.

3b. The departments of state government should examine available options and develop policies to address the day care needs of state employees.

3c. The departments of state government should assist their parent employees by providing information on parenting and the importance of quality day care, and by developing ways to support employees who feel the stress of balancing work and family roles.

Finding No. 4

Because day care is not the primary business of most employers, they need assistance in identifying their response to the day care needs of their employees.

Since most employers have no experience providing day care or offering it as a benefit, they often lack in-house expertise and information necessary to identify need, evaluate options, and develop an optimal program or package of services.

Specifically, they need technical assistance in order to assess the needs of their employees, formulate a long-range plan, design and implement programs and services, develop quality

control monitoring systems, and maintain ongoing day care projects. In addition, they need information about day care options and financial considerations, such as capitalization, tax credits, and insurance. They also need professional consultation about obtaining licenses and designing programs and facilities, as well as information about factors that ensure quality, such as staffing and curricula.

Recommendation No. 4

4a. The Department of Human Services should develop an employer consultation team to work with employers in establishing employer-supported programs. Information and consultation should be provided in the following areas:
- needs assessments
- employer sponsorship options
- financial considerations
- education of employees in selection of quality child care
- comprehensive project planning
- networking among employers

4b. The employer consultation team and the Department of Economic and Community Development should share information and resources in order to educate business and community leaders on day care.

4c. The employer consultation team working with related agencies of state government should develop recommended guidelines for employers to use in requesting and evaluating proposals to establish quality day care programs for their employees.

Finding No. 5

In order to meet the growing need for expansion of quality day care, new financing mechanisms must be developed.

Although it is clearly in the self-interest of businesses to develop a substantive response to their employee day care needs, the cost of meeting this growing need cannot be underestimated. By the year 2000—in less than fifteen years—80 percent of all parents in Tennessee will be working outside the home. The capital cost of constructing facilities and developing programs to care for all their children will be enormous. Financial resources and funding sources currently available for day care cannot begin to meet this need. As partners, the public and private sectors must work to develop new financial resources. The State should assume responsibility for facilitating this process.

Recommendation No. 5

5a. New sources for public and private financing for start up and expansion of day care should be explored, including state, local/state partnerships, private, nonprofit, and foundation sources. New options for financing the capital expenditures for day care should also be explored. These options include but are not limited to:
- state cooperative bank program
- local bond issues
- venture capital program
- limited partnerships

5b. Information and assistance about existing financing options and tax incentives should be provided to employers.

Finding No. 6

The rising cost and limited availability of liability insurance are major problems for providers and employers who sponsor day care programs.

The cost of liability insurance for day care providers in Tennessee has risen an average of 200 percent in the last two years. This expense can deter employers and other potential providers, drive existing programs out of business, and contribute to higher costs for consumers. It also consumes resources that could otherwise be used to enhance quality.

In addition, insurance companies have canceled or refused to renew policies for a large number of day care agencies in this same time period. These providers must secure more expensive coverage, operate without insurance, or close at a time when the need for their services is critical.

The rising cost and dwindling availability of liability insurance have the effect of increasing the cost of care, reducing its quality, and limiting access, especially to low-income families.

Recommendation No. 6

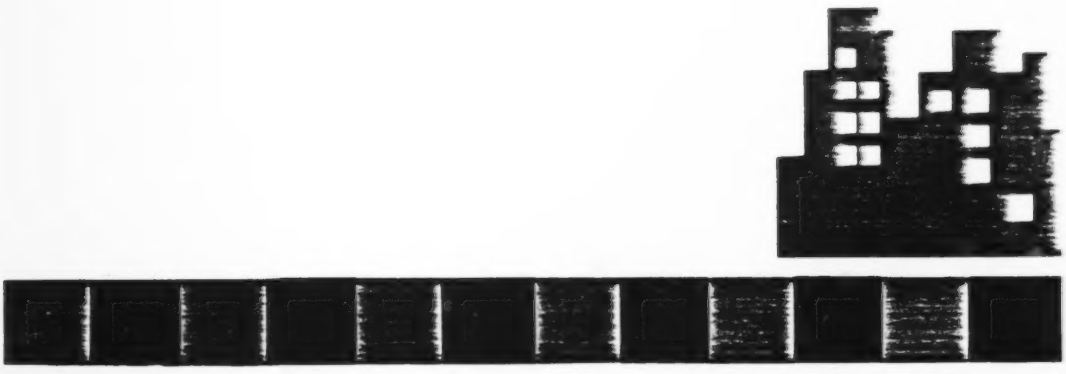
6a. Policy makers should be educated as to how the liability insurance crisis affects day care.

6b. Policy makers should be encouraged to consider legislative remedies addressing liability insurance problems.

6c. Policy makers should give special attention to the problem of securing liability insurance for day care programs in Tennessee.

6d. Liability insurance carriers should be encouraged to offer reduced premiums for quality day care programs. A guide to quality day care should be developed for insurance companies to use in evaluating insurability.

Appendix



LEAD AGENCIES/GROUPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON DAY CARE

RECOMMENDATIONS	RECOMMENDED AGENCIES AND GROUPS
ACCESS TO DAY CARE	
1a. The State, United Way organizations, and other interested groups should expand assistance to low-income families by increasing the availability of subsidized quality day care.	1a. General Assembly, Department of Finance and Administration, Department of Human Services, United Way organizations, etc.
1b. The State's reimbursement to providers serving low-income families should more closely approximate the actual cost of care.	1b. General Assembly, Department of Finance and Administration, Department of Human Services
1c. The State should study the feasibility of a voucher program and other creative options for low-income families. Such programs could improve access to day care for all low-income families, particularly those in rural areas.	1c. Department of Human Services, Tennessee Children's Services Commission
1d. Churches, synagogues, employers, United Way organizations, and civic groups should be encouraged to provide day care scholarships for children of low-income families.	1d. Department of Human Services, churches, synagogues, employers, United Way organizations, civic groups
2a. To increase the availability of quality day care, more infant and toddler day care providers should be recruited and trained. Schools, churches, synagogues, day care agencies, employers, and other community agencies should be encouraged to sponsor infant and toddler programs.	2a. Department of Human Services, churches, synagogues, day care agencies, employers, other community agencies including United Way, Community Chest, Junior Leagues, Council of Jewish Women, Links, etc.
2b. To improve access to family day care homes, a voluntary directory or registry should be established. Criteria for inclusion in the registry should be defined and made available to parents.	2b. Department of Human Services
2c. The model of family day care homes as satellites of new or existing agencies should be promoted.	2c. Department of Human Services, United Way, existing community and professional organizations
3a. All schools, both public and private, should be encouraged to provide or make	3a. Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Tennessee School Board

RECOMMENDATIONS	RECOMMENDED AGENCIES AND GROUPS
facilities available for on-site, year-round day care programs for school-age children.	Association, Tennessee Association for School Supervision and Administration, local school boards/systems, Task Force
3b. Special programs with age-appropriate activities should be developed to meet the needs of older school-age children.	3b. Department of Education, child development professionals, other organizations including YMCA, YWCA, etc.
4. The Department of Human Services should establish a day care planning office to be responsible for the following: • long-range planning including statewide community needs assessments • facilitating coordination among state, regional, and local service and planning agencies • providing support services for grant application and presentation • ensuring the equitable distribution of day care resources for low-income families	4. General Assembly, Department of Finance and Administration, Department of Human Services
5a. To encourage more day care providers to serve handicapped children, technical assistance and training about the special needs of handicapped children should be made available.	5a. Department of Human Services, Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Tennessee Children's Services Commission, Department of Education, Department of Health and Environment, Tennessee Association on Young Children, other organizations providing training including colleges, universities, and vocational schools
5b. The State should increase the level of reimbursement to day care providers who serve handicapped children from low-income families.	5b. Department of Human Services, Department of Finance and Administration, General Assembly
5c. Programs currently serving handicapped children, such as Head Start, should expand their hours to provide full-day service to meet the needs of working parents.	5c. Department of Education, Head Start agencies, local school systems
5d. Churches, synagogues, employers, civic groups, and schools should be encouraged to provide day care scholarships or assistance for handicapped children.	5d. Department of Human Services, churches, synagogues, employers, civic and volunteer groups, and other interested organizations
6. The Department of Human Services should develop a statewide network of resource and referral services. Parent education about quality day care should be an important component of this service.	6. Department of Human Services, other resource and referral services

RECOMMENDATIONS	RECOMMENDED AGENCIES AND GROUPS
7a. School systems and agencies serving teen parents should be encouraged to provide or expand classes in effective parenting skills.	7a. Department of Education, local school boards/systems, community agencies serving teen parents, Department of Health and Environment, Department of Human Services
7b. Schools with high pregnancy rates should be encouraged to offer on-site day care programs to enable teen parents to complete their education and learn child development and effective parenting skills.	7b. Department of Education, local school boards/systems, Department of Health and Environment, Department of Human Services
7c. Child development courses in the schools should be expanded to include practicum components through which students can gain vocational experience while staffing day care services for the children of teen parents.	7c. Department of Education, local school boards/systems
QUALITY OF DAY CARE	
1a. Model programs, in which innovative methods and materials can be demonstrated, should be recognized or developed.	1a. Department of Human Services, colleges and universities, professional organizations including Tennessee Association on Young Children, etc.
1b. Ongoing efforts to increase community awareness and to promote parent education about issues affecting the quality of day care services should be conducted by a variety of organizations.	1b. Department of Human Services, business, civic, volunteer, professional organizations, hospitals, other interested groups
1c. Day care providers should be encouraged to seek opportunities for productive parental involvement. To ensure the quality of care their children receive, parents should be encouraged to become more involved with their children's day care programs.	1c. Department of Human Services, day care providers, parental organizations
2a. The Tennessee Department of Human Services should hire additional professional staff to expand training for child care providers. Training staff should assist providers in utilizing community training opportunities available through high schools, colleges, universities, professional alliances, health care organizations, and other agencies.	2a. Department of Human Services, Department of Education, Department of Health and Environment, high schools, colleges, universities, professional alliances, health care organizations, and other agencies
2b. The Tennessee Department of Human Services should maintain a state-of-the-art learning resource center for use by providers.	2b. Department of Human Services, Department of Education

RECOMMENDATIONS	RECOMMENDED AGENCIES AND GROUPS
2c. The business community should be encouraged to offer workshops to day care providers to enhance their business skills.	2c. Department of Human Services, banking community, business schools, Small Business Administration, Chambers of Commerce, state technical institutes, community colleges, university systems and continuing education offices
3. The state should take the lead in seeking to replace federal funds for day care services that are lost due to federal budget reductions.	3. General Assembly, Department of Finance and Administration, Department of Human Services
4a. A formal incentive system should be developed to encourage day care providers to exceed the required minimal standards. Agencies that meet measurable performance criteria for quality should be formally recognized.	4a. Department of Human Services, Department of Education, Governor's Office
4b. As an incentive for providers who serve low-income families, the State should set a higher level of reimbursement for those who meet measurable performance criteria for quality.	4b. Department of Human Services, General Assembly, Department of Finance and Administration
5a. The Department of Human Services should maintain a staff of licensing counselors to ensure that the ratio of counselors to agencies does not exceed 1 to 40.	5a. Department of Human Services, Department of Finance and Administration, General Assembly
5b. Enforcement of the day care licensing standards should be stronger and more consistent.	5b. Department of Human Services
5c. The various agencies that regulate day care should more effectively coordinate their activities in order to improve consistency, avoid duplication, and make it easier for day care providers to become licensed.	5c. Department of Human Services, Department of Health and Environment, Fire Marshall's Office, local regulators, Fire Prevention Office of the Department of Commerce and Insurance
6. Education policy makers should provide leadership for long-range planning of quality day care for children of all ages. Educators should provide technical assistance for the design of developmentally appropriate day care programs. Educators should help to extend the child care network through schools and other community agencies.	6. Department of Education, Department of Human Services, local school systems/boards

RECOMMENDATIONS	RECOMMENDED AGENCIES AND GROUPS
EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF DAY CARE	
1a. Statewide activities should be sponsored to increase employer awareness about the importance of quality day care.	1a. Task Force, Department of Human Services, Department of Economic and Community Development, business associations including Chambers of Commerce, Tennessee Manufacturers and Taxpayers Association, Tennessee Business Roundtable, voluntary and civic organizations including Rotary Clubs, United Way, etc.
1b. Information about day care should be provided to new and existing businesses through the Department of Economic and Community Development and local business and community leaders, including Chambers of Commerce, the offices of mayors and county executives, and local planning offices.	1b. Department of Human Services, Department of Economic and Community Development, local business and community leaders including Chambers of Commerce, the offices of mayors and county executives, and local planning offices
1c. Local decision makers, such as developers, community planners, and zoning boards, should be encouraged to include day care facilities in their plans for future developments.	1c. Department of Human Services, Department of Economic and Community Development, Chambers of Commerce, local planning agencies
2a. Employers need to be recruited to support day care in their companies or in their communities. Those employers who make commitments should be recognized.	2a. Task Force, Governor's Office, Department of Human Services, Department of Economic and Community Development, business and community organizations
2b. Information should be developed on the full range of options for employer involvement, including: • resource and referral service • flexible benefits, including day care voucher program • consortium for day care with other employers • on-site day care • arrangements with community day care facilities	2b. Department of Human Services
2c. The Department of Human Services should develop a clearinghouse of information on employer-supported day care activities in Tennessee. The availability of this service should be publicized and the information distributed periodically.	2c. Department of Human Services
3a. State government should sponsor a pilot project to serve state employees. This	3a. Department of General Services, Department of Personnel, Department of Human

RECOMMENDATIONS	RECOMMENDED AGENCIES AND GROUPS
project should be designed as a high-quality, comprehensive program that can serve as a model demonstration project.	Services, Department of Health and Environment, Department of Education, Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation
3b. The departments of state government should examine available options and develop policies to address the day care needs of state employees.	3b. All state departments
3c. The departments of state government should assist their parent employees by providing information on parenting and the importance of quality day care, and by developing ways to support employees who feel the stress of balancing work and family roles.	3c. All state departments
4a. The Department of Human Services should develop an employer consultation team to work with employers in establishing employer-supported programs. Information and consultation should be provided in the following areas: • needs assessments • employer sponsorship options • financial considerations • education of employees in selection of quality child care • comprehensive project planning • networking among employers	4a. Department of Human Services
4b. The employer consulation team and the Department of Economic and Community Development should share information and resources in order to educate business and community leaders on day care.	4b. Department of Human Services and Department of Economic and Community Development
4c. The employer consultation team working with related agencies of state government should develop recommended guidelines for employers to use in requesting and evaluating proposals to establish quality day care programs for their employees.	4c. Department of Human Services, other state agencies
5a. New sources for public and private financing for start up and expansion of day care should be explored, including state, local/state partnerships, private, nonprofit, and foundation sources. New options for financing the capital expenditures for day care should also be explored. These options include but are not limited to:	5a. Department of Human Services, Department of Finance and Administration, Department of Revenue, Office of the Comptroller, representatives from financial community, private and community funding organizations, etc.

- state cooperative bank program
- local bond issues
- venture capital program
- limited partnerships

5b. Information and assistance about existing financing options and tax incentives should be provided to employers.	5b. Department of Human Services, Department of Revenue
6a. Policy makers should be educated as to how the liability insurance crisis affects day care.	6a. General Assembly, Governor's Office, Department of Commerce and Insurance, Department of Human Services
6b. Policy makers should be encouraged to consider legislative remedies addressing liability insurance problems.	6b. General Assembly, Governor's Office, Department of Commerce and Insurance, Department of Human Services
6c. Policy makers should give special attention to the problem of securing liability insurance for day care programs in Tennessee.	6c. General Assembly, Governor's Office, Department of Commerce and Insurance, Department of Human Services
6d. Liability insurance carriers should be encouraged to offer reduced premiums for quality day care programs. A guide to quality day care should be developed for insurance companies to use in evaluating insurability.	6d. Department of Commerce and Insurance, Department of Human Services, insurance carriers

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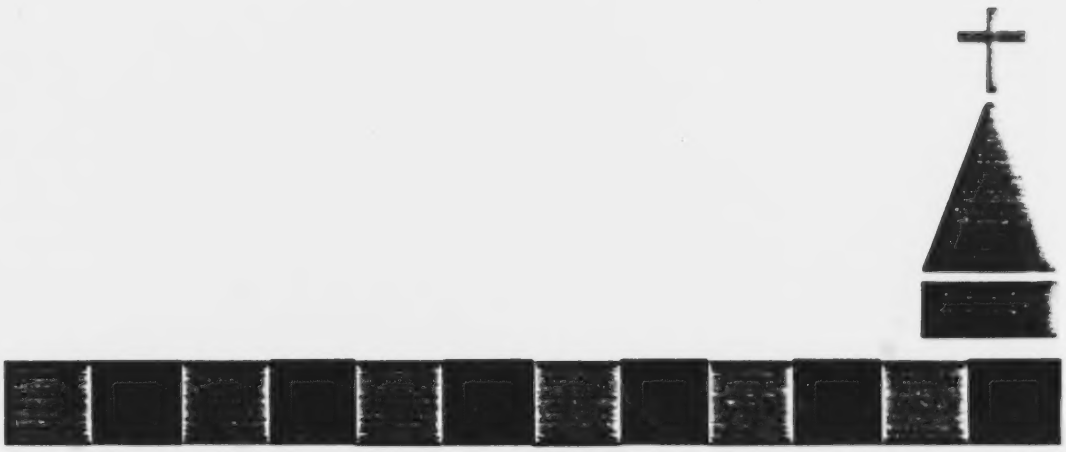

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